



Dear Potential AmeriCorps*VISTA Sponsor:

Thank you for your interest in sponsoring an AmeriCorps VISTA (VISTA) project. We hope that this information will help you decide if VISTA is a resource that is appropriate for your agency and the community that you serve.

VISTA resources in AZ are currently limited and therefore highly competitive. We encourage you to consider a **Cost-Share Partnership** (see enclosed information) if your organization has the financial means to do so. This will ensure a VISTA placement for your project if your application is approved.

VISTA members help organizations like yours to create the sustainable infrastructure needed to **fight poverty** in their communities. VISTA members provide capacity building services and are NOT assigned to direct service roles. VISTA project sponsors may be federal, state, or local agencies, or private, non-profit organizations with a 501 (c) (3) designation. Preference will be given to projects that address the Corporation for National and Community Service Strategic Initiatives. Details on the following four initiatives may be found at http://www.nationalservice.gov/about/focus_areas/index.asp:

- Mobilizing More Volunteers
- Ensuring A Brighter Future for All America's Youth
- Engaging Students in Communities
- Harnessing Baby Boomers' Experience.

Specific Programming priorities for VISTA include:

- Financial Asset Development
- Youth Aging Out of Foster Care
- Prisoner Re-entry
- Rural Community Development
- Tribal Community Development
- Students in Service
- Disaster Response
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service

Please find the following documents enclosed for your review:

1. VISTA Fact Sheet
2. Concept Paper Instructions
3. Cost-Share Partnership Fact Sheet
4. Federal Register Guidelines
5. How to Create an *eGrants* Account

VISTA members serve 40-45 hours per week, addressing problems or issues which have been identified as community priorities. They work on specific goals and activities developed by the sponsoring organization to directly benefit low-income persons in the community. CNCS provides VISTA members with a modest living allowance (approximately \$10,380 in urban areas) which is paid bi-weekly throughout the year. In addition to this allowance, the Corporation provides medical and accident insurance and coverage under the Tort Claims Act. The members also receive either an “end of service stipend” in the amount of \$1,200 or an education award of \$4,725. Both are paid upon the successful completion of service.

It is expected that the sponsoring organization will provide sufficient VISTA support (facilities, equipment and supplies, job-related transportation, supervision, etc.) to accomplish the goals and objectives of the project. All VISTA projects are expected to be phased out and continued without VISTA support after three years. The actual placement of VISTA members at approved projects is contingent upon the availability of funding. Again, please consider a cost-share partnership if you have funds available to support the VISTA member living allowance.

If you are interested in submitting a concept paper, you must apply through our electronic grants system, *eGrants*. Refer to the “How to Create an *eGrants* Application” document included in this package. You will be notified within 30 days whether or not the proposed project meets VISTA criteria. If so, you will submit the full VISTA Project Application in *eGrants*.

Please contact Sharon Mattatall at 602-514-7171 or Smattata@cns.gov if you have any questions about the enclosures, the VISTA application process or VISTA in general.

In Service,

Terry Gunnell
State Program Director